



## **Competition Squad Management: Safeguarding and Welfare Guidelines**

### **Introduction**

The KUGB delivers numerous regional and national karate competitions throughout the year attended by children, young people and adults from all over the UK. Many KUGB clubs select squads of competitors who they supervise at the event and organise travel as well as accommodation where necessary.

KUGB squads from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland also compete in international events across the globe under official European and World bodies. The KUGB has a duty of care to ensure so far as is reasonably possible that those taking part enjoy a safe and positive experience at all events.

This guidance is intended to:

- enhance the safety and well being of all squad members;
- ensure that the particular safeguarding and welfare needs of squad members under the age of 18yrs are met;
- be a valuable resource for coaches and others with a duty of care for squad members.

### **Leadership**

The senior squad coach should assume the leadership position. They will normally have overall responsibility for the planning of the visit to the championships and the supervision of squad members whilst they are there.

Amongst other things the senior squad coach takes responsibility for:

- obtaining parental consent before the championship;
- following the guidance in this document;
- ensuring that travel arrangements, accommodation and dietary considerations are appropriate;
- appropriate planning and preparation before the championship including competitor training, risk assessment and the briefing of assistant coaches, volunteer supervisors, squad members and parents;
- overall organisation during the championship, including leadership of assistant coaches, volunteer supervisors, supervision of squad members, achieving desired outcomes, and the overall health and safety of the squad;
- being aware of child protection issues;
- evaluating the experience after the championship and reporting any important issues to the KUGB.

Assistant coaches and other supervisors are responsible for assisting the squad coach in their responsibilities and contribute to the duty of care afforded to squad members. Parents and volunteers play an important role in providing extra supervision and/or undertaking other tasks. In allocating

roles the squad coach must ensure that those assisting are appropriate, competent, understand their role and are aware of what action to take in the event of emergency.

### **Squad Selection**

The squad coach should ensure that all squad members are competent to compete in the category they are selected for at the championship. Whilst competitors should be encouraged to take on new challenges and overcome nerves, they should never be pressurised into entering an event they haven't prepared properly for, are not competent to enter, or where they are suffering from genuine fear.

### **Squad Members**

It is the responsibility of squad members to:

- follow the instructions of the squad coaches and other supervisors;
- not take unnecessary risks or engage in activities that have not been risk assessed or not part of the championship programme;
- inform the squad coach or other supervisors of any concerns they may have or any issue they feel may cause harm to themselves or others.

Anyone whose behaviour may put themselves or others at risk may be stopped from competing and arrangements may be made to return them home.

### **Risk Assessment**

The objective of assessing risks associated with attendance at the championship is to reduce them to an acceptable level so as to facilitate a safe and positive experience for all. It is an element of the overall planning process so reasonable steps should be taken to identify significant risks together with appropriate methods to mitigate them.

There are three assessments to undertake:

- a general assessment of the common risks of karate competition. This should be obtained from the KUGB and the information disseminated to the squad members and their parents as appropriate;
- a specific assessment of the risks associated with the attendance of the squad at the particular championship. This includes travel to and from the host city, travel to and from the venue, accommodation, dietary needs/provision, the medical and potential other needs of squad members. This is the responsibility of the squad coach.
- an ongoing risk assessment. This is a continuous process of sound judgements being made by the squad coach, assistant coach and others in supervisory roles.

### **Supervision**

Squad coaches and supervisors should take all reasonable steps to ensure that squad members are safe and protected from any unacceptable risk. To exercise supervision means to be in a position of awareness of all that is taking place in any given situation and being able to intervene effectively should the need arise. It does not always mean direct visual contact, but it does include the ability to anticipate potential problems and to take appropriate preventative action.

Supervision can be close or remote but must always be in place and active:

- Close supervision occurs when the squad members remain within general sight and/or contact of the supervisor;
- Remote supervision occurs when, as part of planned activities, squad members are not under close supervision but are subject to clear conditions and controls. The supervisor is present, though not necessarily near or in sight but they are able to monitor the group. The supervisor's location is known, and the squad have a planned means of contacting the supervisor;
- Recreational time - for example during the evenings - may involve close or remote supervision but should not be unsupervised. The supervisors continue to be in charge and owe a duty of care for the squad members and should retain the ability to manage their conduct and welfare.

The ratio of supervisors to squad members is a matter of judgement made by the squad coach and should be established as part of the risk assessment process. As a guide the KUGB recommend a minimum of two supervisors (one male and one female) if the squad is mixed and a ratio of one supervisor for every 15 competitors.

The squad coach should ensure that the assistant coach and all supervisors:

- understand the overall objectives, the supervision arrangements and their role;
- understand the risk assessment and measures taken to mitigate risks;
- carry a list of all squad members and a list of those for whom they are taking specific responsibility where appropriate at all times;
- understand any emergency procedures.

The squad coaches and/or the assistant coach must check regularly that the entire squad is safe and accounted for, especially when leaving the venue, accommodation or during rest stops on a journey,

Where appropriate rendezvous points may be established and squad members told what to do if they become separated. Large squads may be broken into smaller groups each independently supervised but care must be taken when supervisory responsibility is passed on.

### **Accommodation**

Separate male and female sleeping areas should be arranged. Adult squad members should not sleep in the same area as the children. Where hotel accommodation is used, twin rooms may be shared by children of the same or similar ages if they are of the same sex. For the avoidance of doubt a squad member who is 18yrs or older should not share a twin room with another squad member who is under 18yrs. The accommodation for coaches and supervisors should be in close enough proximity to be able to provide supervision and respond to issues if required. Adult supervisors should minimise being alone with young people wherever possible.

Squad coaches and supervisors need to appreciate that harm can be caused by anyone including someone within the squad, or with access to the squad, from an intruder entering the accommodation or as a result of a squad member leaving the accommodation. Adequate control measures should be put in place.

### **DBS Checks**

As KUGB instructors all squad coaches and assistant coaches will be DBS checked. A DBS check is also required for any volunteer supervisors. Of course a DBS check does not in itself guarantee the

suitability of an individual to carry out a supervisory role and the squad coach must assess the suitability of volunteers and provide guidance and monitoring as appropriate.

### **Communicating with Parents**

Parents and guardians should be informed in writing of the nature of the event and/or briefed in person. In order that an informed decision about their child's participation in the championship can be made parents should be advised of the overarching value of the event but also the risks involved. The following information should be provided:

- important dates and times;
- location, proposed itinerary;
- risks involved;
- transport arrangements and name of any travel company involved;
- accommodation/catering details;
- cost;
- number of participants;
- number of coaches and supervisors;
- supervision arrangements, including arrangements for free time and any remote supervision;
- code of conduct/standard of behaviour expected;
- medical and other information;
- insurance cover through up to date KUGB licence;
- pocket money arrangements if appropriate;
- medical arrangements and reminder to bring prescribed drugs such as asthma inhalers;
- advice on necessary clothing, equipment and footwear;
- weight and size limits on luggage, particularly when travelling by air;
- name and telephone number of emergency contact.

### **Medical Consent**

Parental agreement to emergency medical treatment, including anaesthetic and blood transfusion, should be obtained. Whilst doctors might be expected to carry out necessary emergency treatment without parental consent, if parents do not agree to emergency treatment it may be reasonable for the squad coach to withdraw a competitor from the event, given the additional responsibility this could entail.

### **Travel**

Careful thought should be given to planning transport to the championship, especially when this is by road, since this is potentially the highest risk involved. Issues include the level of group supervision

required while travelling, group management issues when boarding or alighting vehicles, managing stops in the journey and, if self-driving, the competence of drivers and availability of support drivers to avoid fatigue.

General considerations include:

- type of journey planned, will this take place locally or does it include long distances?
- most appropriate method of travel;
- arrangements in case of unforeseen circumstances including breakdown;
- supervision while travelling;
- insurance cover;
- managing stops while travelling;
- considering the effects of weather for transport plans;
- choice of reputable travel or transport companies;
- driver competence and training and whether the driver holds an appropriate licence.

### **Use of Private Cars**

Transporting squad members in private cars requires careful consideration. The vehicle owner should check that appropriate insurance cover is in place. Likewise, it is important to ensure that the vehicle is maintained and fit for use.

The squad coach should ensure that:

- prior written consent is obtained from parents and guardians for their child to be transported in a private vehicle (this may not be possible in the event of a real emergency, but this would be reasonable to safeguard young people if required);
- Supervisors and other volunteers using their own cars for transporting squad members must provide assurances that the car is roadworthy, a suitable driving licence is held and that they hold insurance for such use (usually business purposes);
- drivers should be made aware of their duty of care and that they are responsible for the use of seat belts etc;
- volunteer drivers who are in sole charge of youngsters other than their own children are required to be appropriately DBS checked. It is advisable that youngsters occupy the rear seats of the car;
- the maximum seating capacity of the vehicle must not be exceeded;
- children and young people should not be left unattended in vehicles.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Squad coaches and supervisors have a duty of care to make sure that squad members are safe and healthy and a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. They should not hesitate to act should the situation require this to protect the welfare of a squad member.

If an incident or accident occurs the priorities are to:

- assess the situation
- safeguard the group
- attend to anyone injured
- where necessary, inform the emergency services and others who may need to know of the incident.

### **What is an Emergency?**

An emergency can include any untoward occurrence that has a significant effect. It could be the breakdown of a vehicle, the onset of ill health among the squad, a fire occurring within accommodation used or a serious accident resulting in hospitalisation or death.

Consequently, judgements need to be made. Situations involving serious major injury, medical emergency, significant or multiple injuries, missing young people or fatalities require immediate contact with the emergency services. For less serious incidents squad coaches may have access to sufficient resources to deal with the situation themselves.

Everyone including squad coaches, supervisors, squad members and parents should be aware who will take charge in an emergency, who the emergency contact person is and what action will be taken in the event of an emergency. The squad coach will normally take charge of an emergency situation and:

- establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;
- ensure that all the squad are safe and looked after;
- establish who is injured, provide immediate first aid and obtain relevant assistance from emergency services;
- continue to care for the squad and ensure that emergency procedures are being followed;
- ensure anyone taken to hospital is accompanied by an adult.

It may be necessary to notify a number of people following an incident including parents and guardians.

Keep a record if reasonably practicable of the nature of the incident, date and time of occurrence, location of incident, names of casualties and others involved, details of injuries and action taken.

### **Data Protection**

Welfare, medical and emergency information should be accessible to those who need it but squad coaches should ensure that confidentiality is protected and that all personal information is disposed of when it is no longer needed.